(c) Application to register Handloom mark has already been submitted to the concerned authorities in the Month of November, 2006.

(d) Does not arise.

Loan waiver for handloom weavers

†4581. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had made an announcement that loans of handloom weavers will also be waived on the lines of farmers in Punjab, if so, whether it has been implemented;

(b) the number of handloom weavers whose loans have been waived so far, State-wise; and

(c) whether any concession or rebate is being provided to handloom weavers, engaged in weaving of silk sarees in Varanasi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) No, Sir. However, at a function to launch the Handloom Mark on the 28th June 2006, the Hon'ble Prime Minister had *inter alia* stated that credit to handloom cooperatives have been choked because of a debt overhang and desired to look at the problem of debt which is afflicting handloom cooperatives so that this can be rescheduled or cooperatives recapitalised in a manner similar to that done for cooperative banks through the Vaidyanathan Committee.

(b) Nil.

(c) The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms, Minis-try of Textiles is implementing a number of schemes for handloom weav-ers throughout the country including handloom weavers engaged in weaving of silk sarees in Varanasi, to enhance production, productivity and efficiency of the handloom sector and to enhance the income and socio-economic status of the weavers by upgrading their skills and providing infrastructural input and marketing support.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The main developmental schemes implemented during X Plan period were Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY), Integrated Handloom Training Project, Marketing Promotion Programme, Mill Gate Price Scheme, Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme, Weavers' Welfare Scheme and Handloom Export Scheme, Integrated Handloom Cluster Development scheme (IHCD), Mahatama Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojna, Health Insurance Scheme, etc.

The Government of India had also introduced a non-plan Rebate scheme w.e.f. 01.04.2006 for a period of three years. Assistance under the scheme is given entirely by the Central Government. The main objective of the scheme is to provide marketing support to the National level Handloom Organizations/agencies, State level organizations by way of reimbursement of 10% rebate on sale of handloom cloth generated by them during the approved festivals, through their emporia and other sales outlets and or by organizing/participating in special fairs, exhibitions, participating in National/Special Handloom Expos, District Level events etc. This would supplement their ongoing marketing efforts hereby creating scope for keeping the production cycle alive and sustain thereby the existing employment of handloom weavers.

Protection policy for handloom sector

4582. SHRISYED AZEEZ PASHA; Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to .state:

(a) whether the Ministry has any specific plan for implementation of protection policy for the handloom sector, which included production of 11 varieties of cloth reserved for the handloom sector, against the invasion of powerioomS; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) The Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 was enacted with a view to protect the interests of the handloom weavers in the country from the encroachment of the Powerloom and Mill sector on their livelihood. Under the Act, protection to the handloom sector was extended by way of reserving certain